

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 234461
ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-08 SS-15 FRB-03 TRSE-00 COME-00
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O 291602Z SEP 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TUNIS IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 234461

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (ZAANOUNI, MUSTAPHA)

SUBJECT: MINISTER OF PLANNING ZAANOUNI'S DISCUSSIONS
IN WASHINGTON AND NEW YORK

1. PLANNING MINISTER ZAANOUNI IS LEAVING WASHINGTON TODAY
(SEPTEMBER 28) AFTER HAVING MET WITH UNDER SECRETARY FOR
ECONOMIC AFFAIRS COOPER THIS MORNING. ZAANOUNI RECOUNTED
FIVE YEAR PLAN'S NEED FOR EXTERNAL CAPITAL INVESTMENT.
HE ALSO NOTED THE PLAN'S TARGET OF AN ANNUAL GROWTH RATE
OF 7.5 PERCENT AND THE GOT'S CAREFUL SCRUTINY OF THE
EXPECTED DEBT RATIO GROWTH TO 17 PERCENT BY 1981.
ZAANOUNI TOLD COOPER TUNISIA WILL BE RECEIVING 100 MILLION
DOLLAR LOAN ANNUALLY FROM IBRD AND THAT AFRICAN DEVELOP-
MENT BANK'S VERY SMALL LOAN POLICY WAS NOT VERY HELPFUL IN
MEETING TUNISIAN NEEDS. ;AANOUNI RESPONDED TO COOPER.S
QUERY REGARDING PRESENT IMF/IBRD MEETINGS IN WASHINGTON
AS ROUTINE, HOWEVER, ZAANOUNI FOUND NORTH-SOUTH DISCUSSIONS
VERY INTERESTING. COOPER NOTED U.S. IS TRYING TO USE
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PAGE 02 STATE 234461

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE OF THE IBRD AS ORGAN FOR NORTH-
SOUTH DIALOGUE. ZAANOUNI THANKED COOPER FOR U.S. SUPPORT
AT TUNISIAN DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE IN JULY AND REITERATED
TUNISIA'S NEED FOR U.S. SUPPORT AS A PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTOR
IN DEALING WITH OTHER COUNTRIES.
COOPER THEN ASKED ZAANOUNI ABOUT PRESENT TUNISIAN-

LIBYAN RELATIONS. ZAAOUNI REMARKED THAT RELATIONS AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION BETWEEN BOTH COUNTRIES HAS SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVED DURING THE LAST TWO MONTHS. ZAAOUNI NOTED EGYPTIAN-LIBYAN CLASH HAD ASSISTED IN THIS IMPROVEMENT.

2. COOPER INQUIRED ON PRESENT STATUS OF OFFSHORE OIL DISPUTE WITH LIBYA. ZAAOUNI REPLIED THAT BOTH NATIONS, SUBJECT TO RATIFICATION, HAD AGREED TO SUBMIT DISPUTE TO WORLD COURT. WHEN COOPER ASKED IF EXPLORATORY DRILLING COULD TAKE PLACE DURING INTERIM PERIOD BEFORE WORLD COURT DECISION, ZAAOUNI DID NOT RESPOND DIRECTLY TO QUESTION BUT NOTED TUNISIA IS NOW EXPLORING MODEST FIELDS WITHIN ITS TERRITORIAL WATERS. ZAAOUNI ALSO SAID THAT GREATER MAGHREBIAN COOPERATION MUST AWAIT A SOLUTION OF THE SAHARA PROBLEM BETWEEN MOROCCO AND ALGERIA AND THAT AT PRESENT IT IS DIFFICULT TO GET BOTH PARTIES TO MEET TOGETHER.

3. FYI - ZAAOUNI HAS STRESSED TWO MAIN THEMES DURING HIS TALKS IN U.S. I.E. WITH ACTING PRESIDENT POATS (OPIC) SEPTEMBER 26, WITH PRESIDENT MOORE (EXIM), SEPTEMBER 27, AND AT CITIBANK SEMINAR SEPTEMBER 23; NAMELY:

-- TUNISIA'S NEED FOR EXTERNAL PRIVATE LOANS TO SATISFY CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 STATE 234461

FIVE YEAR PLAN REQUIREMENTS; AND

-- TUNISIA'S DESIRE TO EXPAND ITS TRADE WITH U.S. AND DIVERSIFY ITS TRADING PATTERNS AWAY FROM TRADITIONAL EUROPEAN PATHS. CHRISTOPHER

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